

a¹ omit
a software layer on top of the RDBMS for causing the RDBMS to provide referential integrity for heterogenous links, the software layer maintaining at least one data structure useful in ensuring referential integrity.

Please amend Claim 5 as follows:

a²
5. (amended) A computer-implemented method for preventing dangling pointers in heterogeneously scoped links, comprising the acts of:

providing at least one heterogeneously scoped link (HSL) table in a non-RDBMS element communicating with at least one RDBMS, at least one table having a heterogeneously scoped link column, the HSL table being associated with the heterogeneously scoped link column; and
accessing the HSL table to ensure referential integrity in an RDBMS.

Please amend Claim 11 as follows:

a³
11. (amended) A computer program product including computer usable code means programmed with logic for ensuring referential integrity in an RDBMS having at least one table with at least one column of heterogeneously scoped links, the program product comprising:

computer readable code means for maintaining a table in a software layer not part of the RDBMS; and

computer readable code means for using the table to ensure that operations on tuples in the RDBMS do not result in a heterogeneously scoped link pointing to no tuple.

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a4
Please amend Claim 15 as follows:

15. (amended) A system for supporting triggers, comprising:
an RDBMS providing referential integrity for homogenous links; and
a software layer on top of the RDBMS for causing the RDBMS to support triggers using at
least one table.